

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

Member Organisations:

Disabled Peoples' International, Down Syndrome International, Inclusion International,
International Federation of Hard of Hearing People,
World Blind Union, World Federation of the Deaf,
World Federation of the DeafBlind,
World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry,
Arab Organization of Disabled People, European Disability Forum,
Red Latinoamericana de Organizaciones no Gubernamentales de Personas con
Discapacidad y sus familias (RIADIS), Pacific Disability Forum

Oral statement of the International Disability Alliance delivered by Myra Kovary Day of General Discussion on women in conflict and post conflict situations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 49th session, 18 July 2011

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) is a network of global and regional organisations of persons with disabilities representing the over 1 billion people worldwide living with a disability, well over half of whom are women. IDA's mission is to promote the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the CRPD), as well as compliance within the UN system and across the treaty bodies.

Conflict and post conflict situations pose particular risks for women with disabilities who are doubly marginalised on the basis of disability and gender. The lack of accessibility to information, communication and inaccessible physical environments, facilities and services means that women with disabilities find ourselves on the outskirts of protection, rendering us vulnerable to violence, harassment and exploitation. There is a stark lack of data on the circumstances of women with disabilities in conflict periods. The rights violations which women with disabilities experience therefore, remain unaddressed, unexposed and unremedied.

With the CRPD came the important paradigm shift, from viewing persons with disabilities as passive recipients of aid, to being subjects of our own rights and active participants and contributors to society. Several articles of the CRPD uphold the rights of women with disabilities in conflict and post conflict situations. I refer you to IDA's written submission for a complete overview.

Based on the CRPD provisions, IDA calls on the CEDAW Committee to elaborate a General Recommendation to comprehensively address women with disabilities and the unique challenges we face in exercising our rights on an equal basis with others in periods of conflict and in the post conflict process.

Specifically to call on States to:

- Adopt measures to ensure that all services, medical treatment, information and assistance is dispensed in an inclusive and accessible manner with the free and informed consent of the individual concerned.
- Ensure the accessibility of communications and information by making them available in various formats including easy to read texts, Braille, large print, sign languages, closed captions, accessible websites and phone lines, and SMS to deaf emergency management centres.
- Adopt specific measures for protection of women and girls with disabilities from gender based violence in situations of conflict, and ensure that post conflict justice punishes perpetrators and provides compensation and rehabilitation to survivors.
- And consult with and actively involve women with disabilities in pre and post conflict peace building through ensuring reasonable accommodation and accessibility to facilitate our meaningful participation in all stages of peace building including data collection, reconstruction, post conflict justice, development, and reconciliation.